

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

SR
8/15/08
Please replace the paragraph beginning at page ~~9~~⁷, line ~~7~~²⁵ with the following amended paragraph:

FIGURE 3 illustrates a longitudinal cross section of the compression assembly of Fig. 1, with the tube longitudinally stretched to a stretched configuration, and FIGURE 3A illustrates an embodiment in which the tube has two layers of different polymeric materials.

SR
8/15/08
Please replace the paragraph beginning at page ~~12~~¹⁵, line ~~28~~⁹ with the following amended paragraph:

In the illustrated embodiment, the tube 14 is a single layered tube. However, in alternative embodiments, the tube 14 has two or more layers of different polymeric materials (~~not shown~~ see Fig. 3A in which tube 14 has a first layer 20 and a second layer 21). For example, in one embodiment, tube 14 has an outer layer of a first polymer, and an inner layer extending at least along the length of the polymeric tubular layer and formed of a second polymer having a higher coefficient of friction than the outer layer. Thus, the second (inner layer) polymer enhances the frictional attachment of the tube 14 to the polymeric tubular layer 11. The nature of the first (outer layer) polymer is typically chosen to provide other required characteristics such as a high resistance in the axial direction, to thereby provide the multilayered tube 14 with the desired high compressing force/elastic energy in the axial direction during retraction from the stretched configuration. The second (inner layer) polymer can extend the entire length of the tube 14, or preferably extends only along the length of the polymeric tubular layer 11, so that it does not extend along exposed sections of the mandrel 19 at either end of the polymeric tubular layer 11, to thereby minimize frictional forces between the tube 14 and the mandrel along which it must slide during stretching and retraction.